

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A universal joint comprising:
 - a first yoke including a body portion and an overmold portion, the body portion including a base and a pair of arms that extend from the base;
 - a trunnion assembly coupled to the first yoke and extending between the arms; and
 - a second yoke coupled to the trunnion assembly.
2. The universal joint of claim 1, wherein the overmold portion at least partially surrounds the body portion.
3. The universal joint of claim 1, wherein the pair of arms each include an opening formed therethrough that are aligned with one another and the overmold portion at least partially surrounds the portion of the arms that define the openings.
4. The universal joint of claim 3, wherein the overmold portion fills a groove formed in a portion of the trunnion assembly to thereby secure the portion of the trunnion assembly to the overmold portion.

5. The universal joint of claim 1, wherein the base and the pair of arms of the first yoke are unitarily formed.

6. The universal joint of claim 5, wherein the body portion is formed from steel.

7. The universal joint of claim 1, wherein the overmold portion is formed from a group of materials consisting of plastics and metals.

8. The universal joint of claim 7, wherein the overmold portion is formed of nylon.

9. The universal joint of claim 7, wherein the overmold portion is formed of aluminum.

10. A yoke assembly for coupling a first driveline component to a second driveline component, the yoke assembly comprising:

a first yoke having a first body portion and a first overmold portion molded thereto, the first yoke being adapted for coupling to the first driveline component;

a second yoke having a second body portion and a second overmold portion molded thereto, the second yoke being adapted for coupling to the second driveline component; and

a trunnion assembly coupled to the first and second yokes;

wherein at least one of the first and second overmold portions is directly coupled to the trunnion assembly.

11. The yoke assembly of claim 10, wherein at least one of the overmold portions surrounds a portion of the trunnion assembly.

12. The yoke assembly of claim 10, wherein the first body portion includes a pair of first arms, the first arms defining a pair of aligned first openings that are configured to receive a first portion of the trunnion assembly.

13. The yoke assembly of claim 12, wherein each of the first openings is round.

14. The yoke assembly of claim 13, wherein the second body portion includes a pair of second arms, the second arms defining a pair of aligned second openings that are configured to receive a second portion of the trunnion assembly.

15. The yoke assembly of claim 14, wherein each of the second openings is round.

16. The yoke assembly of claim 15, wherein the trunnion assembly includes four bearings, each of the bearings being disposed in an associated one of the first and second openings.

17. The yoke assembly of claim 16, wherein the first overmold portion fixes a first pair of the bearings to the first arms and the second overmold portion fixes a second pair of the bearings to the second arms.

18. The yoke assembly of claim 17, wherein the first pair of bearings is at least partially encapsulated by the first overmold portion.

19. The yoke assembly of claim 17, wherein the first pair of bearings is partially encapsulated by a plurality of tabs formed from the first overmold portion.

20. The yoke assembly of claim 17, wherein a groove is formed in each of the first bearings, and wherein the first overmold portion fills each of the grooves.

21. The yoke assembly of claim 11, wherein at least one of the first and second overmold portions is formed of a material selected from a group consisting of plastics and metals.

22. A method for making a universal joint comprising:

locating a first body portion into a mold, the first body portion having a pair of aligned openings;

locating a trunnion assembly having a plurality of bearings into the mold such that a first pair of the bearings are disposed within the openings in the first body portion;

locating a second body portion into the mold, the second body portion having a pair of aligned openings, the second body portion being located within the mold such that a second pair of the bearings are disposed within the openings of the second body portion; and

injecting a material into the mold to form first and second overmold portions, the first overmold portion being configured to fix the first pair of bearings to the first body portion, the second overmold portion being configured to fix the second pair of bearings to the second body portion.